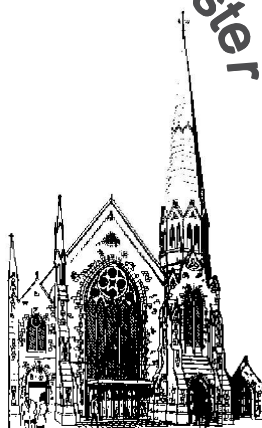


# NEWS

## United Church Dorchester



**FEBRUARY 2026**

Registered Charity No: 1137996

**Methodist and United Reformed**  
Part of Churches Together in Dorchester

**Minister** ([Rev John Yarrien](#)) 01305 262421  
John's rest day is usually Friday. Please contact one of the Church Stewards if necessary.

**Pastoral Support Assistant:** [Ruth Magee](#)  
**Church Secretary:** [Michael Humphrey](#)  
**Church office:** 01305 457477  
**Website:** [unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk](http://unitedchurchdorchester.org.uk)

Private Tel & email removed from web version

**We are a Christian Community seeking to be a Beacon of God's Light and Love for All**

### Sunday Services

#### 1<sup>st</sup> February

10.30 am Rev Peter Clark  
Holy Communion

#### 8<sup>th</sup> February

10.30 am Rev John Yarrien  
4.00 pm Tea-Pot

#### 15<sup>th</sup> February

10.30 am Dr Colin Farrant  
6.30 pm Rev John Yarrien

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> February

10.30 am Rev John Yarrien

### Market Day Services

Wednesdays at 10.45 am

4<sup>th</sup> February Rev John Yarrien  
11<sup>th</sup> February Rev Brenda Stephenson  
18<sup>th</sup> February Mr Chris Warren  
25<sup>th</sup> February Mr Peter Jenner

### Afternoon Tea and Favourite Hymns

The next Tea-Pot is on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, in the Hall at 3.30pm for 4pm, until 5.30pm.

The church is open for **Morning Prayer** each Tuesday starting at 8.30am. All welcome.

### Church Family News

We are sad to announce the death of Peter Prior in his sleep. Peter celebrated his 90th birthday last October. He had been active in the local community for many years and the church was full for the service to celebrate his life.

### Lent Lunches

This year Ash Wednesday will be the 18th February, and we shall serve Lent lunches for seven weeks from then until Easter. Every Wednesday from 12 noon until 1.30pm, Sue Gannaway and her team of helpers will serve a variety of salads and a delicious selection of desserts, all accompanied by a cup of tea or coffee. The lunches will be served in the hall immediately after the Coffee Morning. Why not come along and enjoy a lovely meal in good company. The charge is £8, with all profits going to [Christian Aid](#) and [Action for Children](#).

### Saturday Men's Breakfast Meetings

The Men's Group meetings in 2026 will be in the coffee lounge at 8.30 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. Paul Wallis

### Prayer Chain

If you would like prayer for yourself or others at any time, please contact [Enid Parson](#). Details can be given anonymously, and confidentiality within the prayer chain is absolute unless there is a safeguarding risk.

### Wednesday Coffee Morning Charity Stalls

The charities booked in during February are:

February 4	Julia's House	18	Dorchester Poverty Action
11	Freedom from Torture	25	Marie Curie

If you know of any charities who might be interested in having a stall in future months (we only have one charity stall each Wednesday) then please put them in touch with me, but we have no vacant weeks before July.

John Parson

### Journey to the Empty Tomb during Holy Week

It is quite a while since we have held Journey to the Empty Tomb during Holy Week, which this year is the week commencing 30th March. We will have the Church open so that people can visit the various stations which will tell of the events that led up to Easter Day. Times and dates are being finalised and will be in the March newsletter along with information about the help that will be needed for stewarding during the times we will be open. See Peter Jenner for more details.

### Family and Outreach Event

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February - Pancake Party – 3 to 4.30/5pm in the Hall

This is for all, Story Tots and Forest Praise families and church family to come along and enjoy freshly made pancakes. Various fillings will be available along with hot drinks. We will also have some toys out for children to play with. We look forward to seeing you there.



### United Church Shop

Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday,  
10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

[The shop](#) is in Charles Street, at the back of the church building,  
opposite Dorchester Library

We have a new range of Shared Earth cards which are bright and colourful. We are initially selling them at a reduced price, and we also have some boxed Christmas cards reduced in price. Please remember to support the shop.

### Date for your diary

[Dorchester Poverty Action](#) coffee morning  
with free refreshments to say thank you to all  
our supporters

**Saturday 14 March 10am – 12 noon**

In United Church hall  
Stalls and raffle  
Everyone welcome

### Church Meeting dates

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm

All are welcome to attend

### **Meetings, meetings, meetings!**

Like most organisations, a busy church cannot function well without meetings. We meet to review our projects, take decisions, plan for the future and listen carefully to each other's views.

Our Church Meetings are a key part of how we do things at UCD and we value the input from the congregation. We have a membership of over 170 and in 2025 the average attendance, including at the AGM, was 41 (only 27 of us were at the November Church Meeting). Perhaps these meetings are becoming too boring for some, or maybe we are not addressing the issues that matter most to our members. We are determined to improve our Church Meetings so please pass on your thoughts on what topics you would like to have discussed either by speaking to John or one of the Church Stewards. Alternatively, jot down your ideas on the 'Church Meeting' slips and post them in the box in the Foyer.

John and the Church Stewards have also been discussing our schedule of meetings and how we can be more efficient. The conclusion reached is not to hold more meetings but less. The Church Stewards have a remit to work within a specific team or committee along with their other responsibilities. So, to focus more on these key areas, the Council of Stewards will now be reducing our meetings to 6 times per annum, which is in line with the UCD Constitution.

We also propose to reduce the number of our Church Meetings (Ordinary Congregational Meetings) from three to two. This would mean that, from 2027 onwards, there would be no Church Meeting in February. When pressing matters have arisen during the year, we have successfully held single-item agenda Church Meetings.

These changes will bring us more in line with other Churches in the Circuit, reduce the amount of printed paper (sometimes over 400 sides for one Church Meeting) and reduce the workload of our hard-working Minister.

Therefore, at the next Church Meeting on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026**, we will put forward a resolution to have two Church Meetings (in July and November) not three, plus the Annual General Meeting (in April). As this is a change to our Constitution, at least 20% of our membership need to attend and for the vote to pass it will require a clear majority of at least two-thirds of those eligible to vote at the meeting. Please make a note in your diary and we look forward to hearing about what other topics you would like discussed.

[Michael Humphrey](#)

Church Secretary

### **Reverse Advent Calendar**

Although UCD did not officially promote the Reverse Advent Calendar this Christmas, nonetheless several people did what they had done in previous years and put a coin in a jam jar on each day in Advent. It is not so much a way of raising money for a worthy charity, but more a spiritual preparation for Christmas as each day we thank God for sending his son, Jesus, to be our Saviour. Several people handed their jam jars to us, and we were able to give £235 to the treasurer of the [Food Bank](#), who has subsequently sent us an email asking us to thank all who contributed.

John and Enid Parson

### **World Day of Prayer 2026**

This year the service for the [World Day of Prayer](#) has been compiled by the [Christian women of Nigeria](#) with the theme “I will give you rest, come” taken from Matthew chapter 11.

Please do come along to:

**Coffee Morning and Stalls**  
**Saturday 7th February, 10am - 12 noon**  
in the United Church Hall  
Entry £2 (includes coffee/tea and biscuits)

**World Day of Prayer Service**  
**Friday 6th March, 10.30am**  
United Church Dorchester

### **Notices for news sheet**

The deadline for the March news sheet is midday on Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> February. Please send notices for inclusion to [Myra Dawson](#)

### **Church Website**

Don't forget to check out the [church website](#), which is managed by Kevin and Susy Rogers. As well as a downloadable version of the news sheet, it also gives information on a number of different things concerning the church and how it runs. The website belongs to the church as a whole so you are encouraged to contribute – please [send in](#) any information about [Events](#) taking place at the church, or [Latest News](#) items that may be of interest.

### **Data Protection Act**

In common with most other churches and organisations, the United Church Dorchester keeps pastoral records of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of regular worshippers and friends. The information is used for church purposes only, is never communicated to any other body and is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Please notify us in writing if you do not wish your data to be held by us in this way.